



Fort Belvoir Directorate of Emergency Services

Fire and Emergency Services Division

Office of the Fire Marshal

6100 Abbot Road

Fort Belvoir, VA 22060

Office: (703) 805-2091 Non-Emergency Dispatch (703) 806-6911



Fort Belvoir Recreational Grilling Safety Requirements

Fort Belvoir, VA—April 23, 2015 Beautiful spring weather is upon our region and in the interest of everyone having a safe and enjoyable outdoor grilling season, the Fort Belvoir Fire & Emergency Services Division would like to share some information on open flame cooking devices.

Grills shall only be used outdoors. Use of a grill indoors or in any enclosed space, such as tents, garages, etc. poses both a fire hazard and risk of exposure to toxic gases and potential asphyxiation.

- Never leave grill unattended while in use or hot.
- Position the grill safely away from any building, siding, deck railings, other combustibles, and out from under eaves or overhanging vegetation.
- Do not use any grill on balconies, covered porches and carports.
- Place the grill a safe distance from lawn games, play areas and foot traffic.
- Keep children and pets away from the grill area – declare a 3-foot “safe zone” around the grill.
- Put out several long-handled grilling tools to give the chef plenty of clearance from heat and flames.
- Periodically remove grease or fat buildup in trays below grill so it cannot be ignited by heat.

Charcoal Grills

- Only proper charcoal starter fluid should be used – Never use flammable or combustible liquid, other than charcoal starter fluid, to ignite the grill.
- Store charcoal starter fluid out of reach of children and away from heat sources.
- Never add charcoal starter fluid when coals or kindling have been ignited.
- Charcoal ash can remain hot for several days, and can start a fire long after the grill has been used. Use caution when disposing of ashes and never store ashes in a plastic or other combustible container.

Gas Grills

- Check for gas leaks before using the grill for the first time each year.
- Soapy bubble test

1. Turn on the gas supply (not the grill).

2. Apply a light soap and water solution to the hose and couplings (a spray bottle works well).

“Keeping the Homefront Safe”



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Bubbles reveal escaping gas. If you determine your grill has a gas leak, by smell or the soapy bubble test:

- a. Turn off the gas supply
- b. If the leak stops, have the grill serviced by a qualified professional before use.
- c. If the leak does not stop, call the Fire Department – 911 or 703-781-1800
 - If you smell gas while cooking, immediately turn off the gas supply, get away from the grill and call the fire department. Do not attempt to move the grill.
 - All gas cylinders manufactured after April 2002 must have overfill protection devices (OPDs). OPDs shut off the flow of gas before capacity is reached, limiting the potential for release of propane gas if the cylinder heats up. You can easily identify OPDs by their triangular-shaped hand wheel.
 - Use only equipment bearing the mark of an independent testing laboratory and properly listed for the application (commercial, residential, etc.) Follow the manufacturer's instructions on assembly, installation, use and maintenance.
 - Never store propane gas cylinders in buildings or garages. If you store a gas grill inside during the winter, disconnect the cylinder and leave it outside.
 - Natural gas installations require permits and inspections by the Directorates of Public Works and the Directorate of Emergency Services.

If you live in a private dwelling (single family home, duplex, townhouses) the above requirements shall be met and an open flame permit is not required. Recreational grilling at approved barrack's pavilions are considered private recreational grilling.

If you reside in any temporary lodging facility on the installation the use or storage of open flame cooking devices is prohibited. Additionally, the use or storage of propane (LP gas) is prohibited in or on any building. If residing off the installation, please check your county/city for their specific codes. Violations can result in jail time and a fines.

An open flame permit from the Fire Marshal's Office is required for grilling at any non-residential location on Fort Belvoir. Permit issuance requires an onsite inspection and can be requested by calling 703-805-2091 in advance of your grilling event.

All commercial grilling services require a permit and a 10lb ABC fire extinguisher.

To find out more about safe grilling or questions about this topic, please contact the Fort Belvoir Fire Marshal's Office at (703) 805-2091.

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